

## CHAPTER 5 COMPLAINT, INVESTIGATION, AND RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

[Prior to 9/9/87, Campaign Finance Disclosure[190] Ch 1]  
[Prior to 3/30/94, Campaign Finance Disclosure Commission[121] Ch 1]  
[Prior to 8/21/02, see 351—Ch 1]

### **351—5.1(68B) Formal complaints.**

**5.1(1)** A formal complaint shall be on forms provided by the board and shall be certified under penalty of perjury. The complaint shall contain all information required by Iowa Code section 68B.32B(1).

**5.1(2)** A formal complaint may not be deemed accepted by the board until after completion of the legal review required by Iowa Code section 68B.32B(4). If the board's legal counsel opines that the complaint contains a legally sufficient allegation, the complaint is deemed accepted upon the completion of the legal review. If the board's legal counsel opines that the complaint does not contain a legally sufficient allegation and the board, upon review, makes a determination that the complaint does contain a legally sufficient allegation, the complaint is accepted upon completion of the board review. If the board's legal counsel opines that the complaint does not contain a legally sufficient allegation and the board, upon review, concurs, the complaint shall be dismissed without having been accepted.

**5.1(3)** Notice to the subject of a complaint is made only when a complaint is accepted, subject to the conditions of Iowa Code section 68B.32B(3). A complaint is a public record, subject to the conditions of Iowa Code section 68B.32B(11).

**5.1(4)** The board's review of a formal complaint for legal sufficiency is not a contested case proceeding and shall be made solely on the basis of the facts alleged in the complaint.

**5.1(5)** The board may, on its own motion and without the filing of a complaint by another person, initiate investigations into matters that the board believes may be subject to the board's jurisdiction. As provided in Iowa Code section 68B.32B(7), persons may provide information to the board for possible board-initiated investigation instead of filing a complaint.

### **351—5.2(68B) Investigations—board action.**

**5.2(1)** Upon a determination that a formal complaint contains a legally sufficient allegation, the board shall refer the complaint to staff for investigation.

**5.2(2)** On its own motion the board may refer to staff for investigation matters that the board believes may be subject to the board's jurisdiction, including matters brought to the board's attention by members of the public.

**5.2(3)** Investigations may include the issuance and enforcement of investigative subpoenas requiring the production of books, papers, records, and other real evidence, as well as requiring the attendance and testimony of witnesses for the purpose of an investigative interview.

**5.2(4)** Upon completion of an investigation, staff shall make a report to the board and may provide a recommendation for board action.

**5.2(5)** Upon receipt and review of the staff investigative report and any recommendations, the board may:

- a.* Redirect the matter for further investigation;
- b.* Dismiss the case for lack of probable cause to believe a violation has occurred;
- c.* Dismiss the case without a determination regarding probable cause as an exercise of administrative discretion;
- d.* Make a determination that probable cause exists to believe a violation has occurred and direct administrative resolution of the matter as provided in subrule 5.4(2);
- e.* Make a determination that probable cause exists to believe a violation has occurred and direct the issuance of a statement of charges and notice of hearing for a contested case proceeding.

**351—5.3(68B) Grounds for disciplinary action.** The board may impose discipline against a person subject to the board's jurisdiction who commits a violation of Iowa Code chapter 56 or 68B or rules adopted under either chapter.

**351—5.4(68B) Disciplinary remedies; administrative resolution of enforcement matters—contested case appeal.**

**5.4(1)** If it is determined after a contested case proceeding that a violation of statute or rule under the board's jurisdiction has occurred, the board may impose any of the actions set out in Iowa Code section 68B.32D.

**5.4(2)** Violations may be handled through administrative resolution rather than through the full investigative and contested case process. The board may order administrative resolution by directing that the person take specified remedial action. The board may also order administrative resolution by issuing a letter of reprimand.

**5.4(3)** A person subject to board discipline may accept administrative resolution, but is not required to do so. If the person accepts the administrative resolution by complying with the directed remedial action or accepting a letter of reprimand, the matter shall be closed. If the person wishes to appeal the administrative resolution, the person shall make a written request for a contested case proceeding and shall submit the request within 30 days of the date of the correspondence informing the person of the board's decision.

**5.4(4)** The board shall issue a statement of charges upon timely receipt of a request for a contested case proceeding to appeal the administrative resolution. The contested case shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions in 351—Chapter 7. The board's legal counsel shall have the burden of proving the violation. Failure to challenge the administrative resolution through a request for a contested case is a failure to exhaust administrative remedies for purposes of seeking judicial review.

**5.4(5)** The board may administratively resolve late-filed campaign finance disclosure reports through the provisions in 351—Chapter 6, late-filed personal financial disclosure statements through the provisions in 351—Chapter 11, and late-filed executive branch lobbyist and client reports through the provisions in 351—Chapter 13.

**5.4(6)** The board may admonish any person who it believes has committed a minor violation to exercise care. An admonishment is not discipline and is not subject to contested case review.

**351—5.5(68B) Settlements.** Settlements may be negotiated during an investigation or after the commencement of a contested case proceeding. Negotiations on behalf of the board shall be conducted by the board's legal counsel. All settlements shall be in writing and are subject to approval of a majority of the full board. If the board declines to approve a proposed settlement, the settlement shall be of no force or effect to either party.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 68B.32B.

[Filed July 3, 1974]

[Filed 10/28/75, Notice 8/25/75—published 11/17/75, effective 12/22/75]

[Filed emergency 2/11/76—published 3/8/76, effective 2/11/76]

[Filed emergency 4/1/76—published 4/19/76, effective 4/1/76]

[Filed 11/6/81, Notice 9/30/81—published 11/25/81, effective 1/1/82]

[Filed 8/21/87, Notice 6/17/87—published 9/9/87, effective 10/14/87]

[Filed 4/23/92, Notice 2/19/92—published 5/13/92, effective 6/17/92]

[Filed 9/23/93, Notice 4/28/93—published 10/13/93, effective 11/17/93]

[Filed 3/11/94, Notice 1/5/94—published 3/30/94, effective 5/4/94]

[Filed 7/29/94, Notice 5/25/94—published 8/17/94, effective 9/21/94]

[Filed 12/1/95, Notice 10/25/95—published 12/20/95, effective 1/24/96]

[Filed 3/3/99, Notice 1/13/99—published 3/24/99, effective 4/28/99]

[Filed 8/1/02, Notice 6/26/02—published 8/21/02, effective 9/25/02]